

Introduction

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The goal of the year-in-review project is to provide a thumbnail sketch of the key developments in international law. It is intended to serve as a research tool for practitioners, academics, and students of international law to answer a simple question: What happened this year? What began as a noble experiment has become an institution. Almost every committee of the Section now recognizes that one of its principal duties is to report to the legal community on the developments of the past year. This year is no exception, and we set a record with over 700 pages in print. So voluminous were the submissions that again we are forced to publish the contributions from the Comparative Law Division in this fall issue of *The International Lawyer*. I encourage you to peruse the fall and summer issues in tandem to garner a more complete overview of the events of the year 2000.

What is most interesting about the foreign law contributions are that they provide insights into some of the most significant developments in international law outside the United States. These contributions are particularly useful in that they examine contributions to the international law field that often are neglected by most U.S. lawyers. Close to home, the Mexican and Canadian law committees provide significant guidance on the important developments in those countries last year. For example, the Mexican law committee's contribution offers a summary of the July 2000 Free Trade Agreement between Mexico and the European Union (EU), a treaty that will no doubt dramatically impact not only EU-Mexican relations but also trade with the United States.¹ The Canadian law committee outlines important legislation or judicial decisions impacting aviation, antitrust, customs, environmental, telecommunications, and trade law.² The European law committee reports on developments in seven jurisdictions in Europe, addressing such important developments as the reorganization of the French Code of Criminal Procedure, a new Spanish Civil Procedure law, entry into force of legislation implementing the European Convention on Human Rights in the United Kingdom, Italian implementation of an EU directive on natural gas, major tax increases on dividend income in Norway, insider trading legislation in Sweden, and new Internet and e-commerce legislation in France, Ireland, Italy, Norway,

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1. James R. Holbein et al., *Mexican Law*, 35 INT'L LAW. 927 (2002).

2. Dean Saul et al., *Canadian Law*, 35 INT'L LAW. 879 (2002).

and Spain.³ The African law committee outlines major developments in Africa and in African-U.S. relations. Among the most important of these is the enactment of the African Growth and Opportunity Act of 2000, which will dramatically enhance U.S. trade with Africa. This piece also outlines intellectual property rights in Africa and describes the work of the little-known Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa.⁴ Finally, we welcome the newest addition to the foreign law section with a wonderful article by Bruce Bean outlining the Russian legal system and highlighting some of its most important aspects for foreign investors.⁵ Important new developments described in this piece include a new Russian tax regime, new accounting rules, and new banking rules.

A project of this magnitude could not have been accomplished without the dedicated efforts of many individuals, and as the project has become institutionalized, more and more individuals merit recognition. First and foremost, I thank the contributors. This year's review had almost 150 contributors who wrote approximately thirty-four articles. Of course, the views expressed are those of the individual authors, not the Section of International Law and Practice. Moreover, while a uniform style regarding formatting and footnoting was encouraged, it would be impossible to say that this goal was achieved with this many contributors.

Also deserving special acknowledgement are the division chairs of the Section—Michael Byowitz, Stuart Deming, Aileen Pisciotto, and Deborah Enix-Ross—who assisted in securing the submissions of their respective committees. In addition, the leadership of the Section, Chair Dan Magraw and Chair-Elect Bob Lutz, continue to provide active support for the project. These efforts contributed to the quantity and quality of the submissions.

Finally, I thank Southern Methodist University for its support. Those particularly deserving recognition are Dean Christine M. Szaj, executive editor of the project, Rita Stoy, administrative assistant of *The International Lawyer*, Claire Hetherington, editor-in-chief of *The International Lawyer*, Shereen El Domeiri, managing editor of *The International Lawyer*, and the many law students at Southern Methodist University who assisted with the project.

Any comments or questions may be submitted to me. My mailing address is as follows: Professor Roger Alford, Pepperdine University School of Law, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, CA 90263. My email address is roger.alford@pepperdine.edu.

3. James H. Bergeron et al., *European Law*, 35 INT'L LAW. 899 (2002).

4. Jamie Eisenfeld & François Serres, *African Legal Developments in the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa*, 35 INT'L LAW. 869 (2002).

5. Bruce Bean, *Doing Business in the New Russia: Rebirth of the Russian Nation*, 35 INT'L LAW. 961 (2002).